

December 15-17, 2012

Please note that news sites update their hyperlinks, so it is advised that articles of interest be read soon as they might not be accessible later.

Detroit Legal News: 'Court Stories' is new online video series about Michigan courts

"Telling the everyday stories of Michigan courts – and the people they serve – is the focus of a new online video series, Court Stories, a production of the Michigan Supreme Court Office of Public Information.... The first video, 'Youth Fitness Academy,' tells the story of an Otsego County juvenile court program that, through physical fitness and lessons about personal responsibility, offers young offenders a way to a better life."

[Full story](#)

Note: The article also ran in the Oakland County Legal News.

Also see:

***Court Stories*, new online video series about Michigan courts, debuts today**

[Press release](#)

The Detroit News: Court: Dearborn bicyclist hit by bus can't sue

"A man who was struck by a SMART bus while riding a bicycle won't get his day in court after the Michigan Supreme Court threw out his lawsuit.... The bus agency was aware of [Mark] Smith's injuries because he was interviewed twice by an insurance representative.... The [Supreme Court] dismissed the lawsuit last week because Smith failed to file a written claim within 60 days."

[Full story](#)

Also see:

Detroit Free Press: Bicyclist hit by Detroit-area bus can't sue, court says

[Full story](#)

Associated Press: Court: Bicyclist hit by Detroit-area bus can't sue

[Full story](#)

WDIV-TV(4)/Detroit: 5 years after collision, Michigan Supreme Court throws out lawsuit by bicyclist hit by bus

[Full story](#)

The Detroit News: DTE Energy sues customers who removed smart meter

"DTE Energy is suing the owners of an Oakland County home who removed a new electricity meter. Lillian Cusumano says she had flu-like symptoms and a 'stabbing headache' after the so-called smart meter was installed at her Addison Township home more than a year ago.... The lawsuit in Oakland County court is on hold while state regulators consider DTE's opt-out policy."

[Full story](#)

Also see:

Detroit Free Press: DTE Energy sues customers who removed smart meter

[Full story](#)

The Macomb Daily: DTE sues Macomb homeowner over smart meter

[Full story](#)

Note: The article also ran in the Daily Tribune.

Detroit Free Press: Judge orders Ambassador Bridge owners to pay \$4.5 million to MDOT

"A Wayne County judge has ordered the owners of the Ambassador Bridge to pay \$4.5 million to the Michigan Department of Transportation as one of the final acts in the long-running dispute over the

Gateway project. The Detroit International Bridge Co. must pay that amount to reimburse MDOT for work to complete Gateway after the department took over control of the construction project earlier this year by the order of Wayne County Circuit Judge Prentis Edwards."

[Full story](#)

The Detroit News: Judge berates 'coward' for role in killings of Hamtramck women; Man sentenced to 20-35 years in deaths of two young women

"[Wayne County Circuit Judge Vonda Evans] on Friday had a comforting message for a family grieving over their murdered daughter and harsh words for the man who helped carry out the crime.... Under a plea agreement, [Miguel] Rodriguez was sentenced to 20-35 years in prison."

[Full story](#)

Also see:

Detroit Free Press: Man gets at least 20 years for role in Hamtramck women's kidnapping, killing

[Full story](#)

Detroit Free Press: Joseph Gentz's pretrial hearing postponed in Jane Bashara killing case

"A pretrial hearing for Joseph Gentz, accused of killing Jane Bashara, was postponed until Dec. 21 by Wayne Circuit Judge Vonda Evans on Friday. Gentz, 48, is charged with first-degree murder and conspiracy in the death of Bashara, who he told investigators he killed in January at the direction of her husband, Bob Bashara."

[Full story](#)

The Detroit News: Online portal to replace Michigan government TV

"The state is changing how people can keep an eye on the Michigan government. The Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget and Michigan Government Television are launching an enhanced online portal to replace the MGTV cable channel (mgvtv.org)."

[Full story](#)

Also see:

The MiLW Blog: MGTV signing off from the tube, going online

[Full story](#)

Detroit Legal News: Family Holiday

"The Wayne County Family Law Bar Association held its holiday party Dec. 3. Among those in attendance were [several local court officials and judges]."

[Full story](#)

Detroit Legal News: Holiday hours (second article)

"The Third Circuit Court Civil, Criminal and Family Divisions will be closed Monday, Dec. 24 and Tuesday, Dec. 25 in observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. On Wednesday, Dec. 26, Thursday, Dec. 27, and Friday, Dec. 28, the court will be open for essential services only... The court will be closed on Monday, Dec. 31 and Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2013, in observance of New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, and will re-open on Wednesday, Jan. 2."

[Full story](#)

Detroit Legal News: Dashboard justice?

Mike Nichols writes "Michigan's justice system focuses on the wrong data. Let's make sure all data is turned over in every case - not just statistics on how quickly we can push cases through the system. The use of arbitrary deadlines to measure the performance of judges leaves us with arbitrary justice."

[Full story](#)

Daily Press & Argus Housing dispute unresolved

"A Livingston County judge has ordered a Northville couple and Brighton officials to keep moving toward resolving an ongoing legal dispute over two vacant houses, but it appears little progress has been made. And it doesn't look good for a future agreement."

[Full story](#)

Ingham County Legal News: Innocence by Impossibility

John Masson writes "In July, the Michigan Supreme Court overturned a felony child support conviction against Michigan Innocence Clinic client Selesa Likine. Then, in a second noteworthy victory for the clinic, the attorney general permanently dismissed all the charges this month."

[Full story](#)

Ingham County Legal News: Given his due: District Judge Stewart Newblatt feted at official unveiling of portrait

"Stewart Newblatt had picked his career. He was going to be an engineer, after a stint in the Army at the end of World War II. But after being sent overseas as a young soldier in an investigative unit, with orders to find and bring back a deserter, Newblatt had an awakening that led him into the field of law."

[Full story](#)

Flint Journal: Board chairman says there's no money to expand Genesee County Jail

"Overcrowding at the county jail has reached emergency status for the second time this year, but the crisis will have to be solved without additional jail cells. County Board of Commissioners Chairman Jamie Curtis said there's no money available for expanding the size of the jail."

[Full story](#)

Jackson County Legal News: Parting ways: Retiring justice reflects on Supreme Court years

"When her beloved mother died earlier this year, at the age of 104, Michigan Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly took time to reflect on a life well lived.... The same, in many respects, could be said of Kelly, now in her final days on the state Supreme Court, where she has left her judicial mark over the past 16 years."

[Full story](#)

Note: The article also ran in the Washtenaw County Legal News.

Jackson County Legal News: Title time

"American Title Company of Jackson hosted a holiday open house December 10 at Daryl's Downtown in Jackson. The yuletide festivities were attended by members of the bench and bar, including 12th District Court Chief Judge Darryl Mazur and his wife, Chris. "

[Full story](#)

Kalamazoo Gazette: Van Buren County board appoints new road commissioner, approves union contracts

"... The contract AFSCME, which represents employees of the circuit court, Friend of the Court, probate court, district court, courthouse general and courthouse supervisory, call for 3.2 percent pay increases."

[Full story](#)

Macomb County Legal News: Supreme Court names committee members

"The Michigan Supreme Court has announced its appointments to the Committee on Model Civil Jury Instructions, which drafts standard instructions for juries in civil cases. The 21-member Committee on Model Civil Jury Instructions, created under Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 2001-6, is composed of judges and attorneys appointed by the Supreme Court."

[Full story](#)

Also see:

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEE ON MODEL CIVIL JURY INSTRUCTIONS ANNOUNCED BY MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT

[Press release](#)

The Macomb Daily: Judge seeks \$400,000 fee despite criticized work

"... Judge Michael Hatty of Livingston County Circuit recently sued Detroit-based attorney Richard Goodman for what he claims is his share of the settlement received by Catherine Logan-Brown, 21, who suffered closed head injury nearly 18 years ago when she fell from a bunk bed at the Art Van Furniture store in Clinton Township. Hatty was hired as the attorney in 1995. He relinquished the case in 2009 when he was appointed judge."

[Full story](#)

Note: The article also ran in the Daily Tribune.

MLive.com: University of Detroit Mercy student law group to defend more than 70 homeowners against county eviction

"The University of Detroit Mercy School of Law Mortgage Foreclosure Defense Clinic to will try to give ownership back to more than 70 Wayne County homeowners who it says are facing wrongful eviction. UDM Law's Mortgage Foreclosure Defense Clinic will make its case on Monday Dec. 17 at 9 a.m. in Wayne County Circuit Court."

[Full story](#)

The MiLW Blog: Federal judges plan class action for back pay

"The Associated Press is reporting in the Washington Post that federal judges are seeking class-action certification of a suit to recover cost-of-living increases that were promised but, in some cases, not authorized by Congress."

[Full story](#)

Oakland County Legal News: Judge honored by ABOTA at holiday party

"The Michigan Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) hosted its 2012 Annual Holiday Party on Friday, Nov. 30, at the Detroit Golf Club. Among those enjoying the evening were (left to right) U.S. District Court Judge Julian Cook, Eastern District of Michigan, who was honored with ABOTA's Lifetime Judicial Achievement Award."

[Full story](#)

The Oakland Press Blog: Anonymous Internet Critics II

"This blog has covered the defamation lawsuit filed by the Cooley Law School against one if it's more vocal critics from the beginning. The defamation defendant is one of the legion of graduates that has trashed the law school; in this case, a blog titled 'The Thomas M. Cooley Law School Scam'."

[Full story](#)

Also see:

State Bar of Michigan Blog: Cooley Law School Presses Case In Court Of Appeals to "Out" Anonymous Blogger

[Full story](#)

Sturgis Journal: Friends, family honor [Judge] Welty as he prepares for retirement

"Plenty of adjectives were used Saturday night to describe William Welty and his 22 years as St. Joseph County District Court judge.... David Tomlinson and Rob Pattison were in attendance Saturday. Tomlinson is the probate court judge-elect and Pattison will fill Welty's spot starting Jan. 1. Welty chose to not seek re-election."

[Full story](#)

Three Rivers Commercial-News: Probate register placed on leave

"St. Joseph County Probate Court Register Eva Sylvester has been placed on paid administrative leave through the end of December by Chief Judge Paul Stutesman. On Jan. 1, Probate Judge-elect David Tomlinson will officially begin his duties on the bench and has signaled his intention to bring his law practice secretary Julie Baker into service as probate register, at which time Sylvester's employment with the county will cease."

[Full story](#)

Three Rivers Commercial-News: No new carpet for district judge

"... Meeting in executive session Friday, [the St. Joseph County Commissioners] decided not to act on [District Court Judge-elect Rob Pattison's] request to replace the 21-year-old carpeting — at least until a survey of carpet needs throughout the courthouse and other county offices can be undertaken."

[Full story](#)

Three Rivers Commercial-News: Court advocate dog on hold

"Plans for the St. Joseph County prosecutor's office victims' rights division to obtain an 'advocate dog' have been put on holding pending further consideration by St. Joseph County commissioners."

[Full story](#)

Traverse City Record-Eagle: Child and Family Services presents awards

"Child and Family Services presented its 2012 Community Awards honoring staff, volunteers, human services professionals and others at its Annual Dinner held last month at the Hagerty Center. Award recipients this year are: Humanitarian of the Year — Barb Donaldson, senior probation officer, 13th District Court Juvenile Division, Grand Traverse County."

[Full story](#)

Tuscola County Advertiser: Newly elected Judge Gierhart starts Monday

"Because she won the November election, Amy Grace Gierhart is scheduled to take her seat as Tuscola County 54th Circuit Judge Jan. 1, 2013, but she is going to take that position sooner than that.... The circuit judge position has been open for about a year following Patrick Joslyn's early retirement as circuit judge. Rather than appoint someone to fill in during that time, Snyder let Tuscola County voters decide who they wanted to represent them."

[Full story](#)